

# Project Proposal

**Proposal Title:** Cold Springs Aspen Enhancement

**Proposal Number:** 1198

**DWR Region:** Southeastern Region

**Lead Agency:** DWR

**County:** Carbon

**Project Manager:** Daniel Eddington

**PM Phone:** 4356133717

**Regional Priority:** Within Focus Area

**Project Type:** Terrestrial Habitat

**Proposed Start Date:** 05/15/2010

**Project Location:** The project area is approximately 8 air miles from East Carbon City. Located on the West Tavaputs Plateau near Bruin Point in eastern Carbon County.

**Project Description:** Improve mule deer and elk summer habitat by reducing conifer encroachment and stimulating aspen suckering with the use of prescribed fire on 1054 acres.

**Description of Problem/Need:** Aspen stands in the Cold Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA) are slowly being encroached and replaced by conifer (Sub-alpine fir and Douglas fir) stands due to lack of fire disturbance. A stand dominated with conifers tends to have comparatively less understory forage production, lower diversity of age structure, and consequently have decrease value to wildlife than aspen stands. A series of large and small openings in these stands would create forage areas while promoting young aspen stands to become established. Aspen are shade intolerant species and opening up these stands will encourage aspen regeneration. The lack of disturbance has also weakened the resiliency of these forest stands, and has led to an increase in Douglas fir beetle and spruce beetle infestations. As a result, there are many standing dead conifers found within these stands. A burn would remove this hazardous fuel loading, and set back forest succession to a more desirable pioneer tree species, Aspen

**Objectives:**

- 1) Improve mule deer and elk summer habitat
- 2) Reduce conifer encroachment within aspen stands
- 3) Promote aspen regeneration in declining aspen stands

**Relevance to Strategic Plans:** Mule Deer are Tier III, three-toed woodpecker is a Tier II species, and aspen is a key habitat in the WAP.  
Cold Springs Habitat Management Plan 2005  
Nine-Mile Unit Deer Management Plan  
Cold Springs Forest Stewardship Plan 2007

**Potential Risks:** 1) fire escaping onto BLM land or private property, 2) erosion on steep slopes, and 3) ungulate pressure on young aspen sprouts.

**Proposed Methods:** In the spring of 2010, a prescribed fire will be ignited to remove 1,054 acres of mixed conifer-aspen stands. In addition, the fire will stimulate regeneration of aspen suckering (Kilpatrick and Abendroth 2001). The fire will be set using a helitorch. Fires breaks will be created in necessary areas to prevent the fire from becoming catastrophic, and to protect structures. The mixed conifer/aspen area is surrounded predominately by pure aspen stands or mountain big sagebrush meadows, which will act as a natural firebreak. The fire will create a series of mosaics and different age classes of aspen within the aspen stand. The fire is expected to create roughly 60-70% removal. Forestry, Fire and State Land (FFSL) will orchestrate the fire with supervision from the US Forest Service (USFS). The burn plan will be written by FFSL and USFS, with a Type I Burn Boss assigned to the project. A large area is being treated in order to provide a large enough area to survive potentially intense ungulate pressure.

**Shapefile Name:** HPD 2010\GIS Proposals\SER\1198.shp

**Seed Source:**

**UPCD Reg Team Coord Date:** 01/20/2009

**Proposed NEPA Action:**

**Proposed Arch Action:**

☐ **Vegetation Monitoring** ☐ **Wildlife Monitoring**

**Monitoring Information:** Photo plots will be taken at several locations and will document the changes in vegetation over time. Photos will be taken prior to the treatment and for 2 years post treatment. A Range Trend Study will possibly be established in the treatment area.

**Grazing Management:** This property is not completely fenced from surrounding BLM and private property. Therefore, livestock trespass onto the Cold Springs WMA is possible. Carbon County has a fence-out livestock policy, which allows trespass until the property is fenced. The Cold Springs WMA lies within and adjacent to the BLM's Nine Mile Canyon Wild Horse Management Area, and a herd of wild horses regularly graze and

**SPECIES BENEFITING**

# Project Proposal

Elk

Mule Deer

Three-toed Woodpecker

## LAND OWNERSHIP

Owner	Acres
DWR	216
Private	838
<b>Total</b>	<b>1054</b>

## PROPOSED FUNDING

Source	Amount Requested	Date Approved	Amount Approved
Habitat Acct 174	\$15,000.00		\$0.00
DNR Watershed (FY10)	\$79,566.00		\$0.00
Private	\$28,130.00		\$0.00
SFH	\$20,000.00		\$0.00
MDF	\$20,000.00		\$0.00
RMEF	\$20,000.00		\$0.00
FFSL	\$94,966.00		\$0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$277,662.00</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>

## PROPOSED BUDGET

Item	Description	DWR Account	Partner Contrib.
Personal Services	Engine Crews, Helitorch crew,	\$33,257.00	\$65,743.00
Equipment	Helicopter, Fuel truck, False start, mixing agent,	\$89,797.00	\$42,387.00
Overhead	Burn Boss, Saftey Officer, Hold Boss, Firing Boss	\$0.00	\$14,966.00
Planning	Aerial Recon	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Archaeological Survey	\$28/acre for 1054 acres	\$29,512.00	\$0.00
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$154,566.00</b>	<b>\$123,096.00</b>

## PROPOSED FUNDING ALLOCATION

Funding Type	Funding Percent
Big Game	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Project Map: